any adverse rulings from the Parliamentarian. Over the last several decades, Senators on both sides have refrained from such a dangerous move because of the precedent it would set.

Here is another instance where, despite pressure from some in my party, Leader MCCONNELL refrained from eliminating the legislative filibuster. He knew how detrimental it would be to the U.S. Senate as an institution.

Basically, what we are hearing now about budget reconciliation and considering eliminating the Byrd rule is essentially a backdoor method to eliminate the filibuster and push the most partisan, controversial measures through with only a simple majority.

In 2001, Senator Byrd said: "Reconciliation was never, never, never intended to be used as a shield for controversial legislation by depriving Senators of their rights and their duty to debate and amend." But that is precisely what our Democratic colleagues are reported to be considering now—to overrule the advice of a nonpartisan adviser to the Senate so they can deprive Senators of their duty and ability to debate and amend legislation.

I urge our colleagues not to go down this road. After all, you would have thought they learned a lesson now that the shoe is on the other foot when it comes to nominations and the filibuster.

In 2013, then-Majority Leader Harry Reid went nuclear and eliminated the 60-vote cloture requirement on judicial nominees—something distinct and different from a legislative filibuster but applied to nominees. Leader MCCONNELL told our colleague from Nevada at the time: "You'll regret this, and you may regret this a lot sooner than you think." And as it turned out, he was right.

As our colleagues now know very well, the Republican-led Senate confirmed more than 230 judges who were nominated by President Trump, all thanks Harry Reid's rule change. This action cleared the way to eliminate the 60-vote cloture threshold on Supreme Court nominees, which lead to the confirmation of three Supreme Court Justices during the Trump Presidency.

There are inherent and perhaps unintended consequences of changing the rules in a place where your power is never permanently guaranteed. Chipping away at the rights of the minority may help you now, but you are sure to regret that someday, just as Democrats now regret the day Harry Reid cleared an easy path for hundreds of conservative Federal judges.

There are a few ways to stop this madness before Democrats head down this dangerous path. The first is for President Biden to intervene and warn Senate Democrats not to break the rules by ignoring decades of precedent.

We are less than 2 weeks in a Biden Presidency, which was won on the promise of working together. President Biden consistently pointed to his experience as a U.S. Senator as evidence of

his ability to reach across the aisle to get things done. This will be his first test. Will he urge Senate Democrats to pursue a bipartisan approach to legislating, or will he give up on his single largest campaign promise less than 2 weeks into his administration?

The second option is for our Democratic colleagues to speak up. Senators MANCHIN and SINEMA stood up to the Democratic leader when he threatened to eliminate the filibuster. As I see it, this is no less dangerous.

Whatever precedent you set or break when you are on one side will affect you when you are on the other side, which you, inevitably, will ultimately be.

If Democrats destroy the budget reconciliation process now, it will clear the way for them to pass a progressive agenda with absolutely zero need for Republican votes. That could include everything from Federal funding for abortions to heavyhanded climate policies. And when Republicans ultimately find themselves in the majority, all of these policies could be eliminated with a party-line vote and replaced with new laws.

This is a dangerous and unnecessary road to go down, and our Democratic colleagues have a duty, I believe, as Members of this body, to respect its rules and respect the Senate as an institution. The Senate should not replace the Byrd rule with Harry's rule.

I would like to once again share some wise words from our late colleague Senator Byrd, who was known as a master of the Senate rules and process and procedure. Not long before his death, he spoke in a Senate Rules Committee hearing about the importance of protecting minority rights—something the Senate has been known for. Oddly enough, the current Democratic leader was presiding at the time. Senator Byrd said:

As I have said before, the Senate has been the last fortress of minority rights and freedom of speech in this Republic for more than two centuries. I pray that Senators will pause and reflect before ignoring that history and tradition in favor of the political priority of the moment.

I yield the floor.

I suggest the absence of a quorum.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. The clerk will call the roll.

The legislative clerk proceeded to call the roll.

Mr. SCHUMER. Madam President, I ask unanimous consent that the order for the quorum call be rescinded.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. Without objection, it is so ordered.

RECOGNITION OF THE MAJORITY LEADER

The PRESIDING OFFICER. The majority leader is recognized.

UNANIMOUS CONSENT AGREEMENT—EXECUTIVE CALENDAR

Mr. SCHUMER. Madam President, first, I ask unanimous consent that the 5:30 p.m. confirmation vote on the nomination of Alejandro Mayorkas to be Secretary of the Department of Homeland Security occur on Tuesday,

February 2, at 2:30, with all other provisions of the agreement remaining in effect.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. Without objection, it is so ordered.

MYANMAR

Madam President, at the beginning here, I want to briefly address the deeply disturbing reports of a coup in Myanmar. We are monitoring the situation with great concern, and the Biden administration is already providing briefings to the Hill on the state of affairs. Congress stands ready to work collaboratively with the new administration to resolve the situation.

I know this is a region of longstanding concern and interest to the Republican leader, so I hope that we can productively work together in a bipartisan fashion to determine the best course of action for America's interest and for the people of Myanmar.

NOMINATIONS

Madam President, next, this week the Senate will continue to confirm President Biden's outstanding Cabinet nominees. We had intended to finish the confirmation of Alejandro Mayorkas to serve as Secretary of Homeland Security today, but unfortunately, with winter storms hitting much of the east coast, Mr. Mayorkas's confirmation will be delayed until tomorrow to accommodate Members who are having difficulty getting here.

We will also vote tomorrow on the confirmation of former South Bend Mayor Pete Buttigieg to serve as our Nation's next Secretary of Transportation. Mr. Buttigieg is an impressive public servant who has already earned the respect and confidence of both sides. He was reported out of the committee last week on an overwhelming bipartisan vote, and I look forward to confirming his nomination tomorrow.

Now, as we process these nominations on the floor, our Senate committees are hard at work preparing the next slate of nominees, including Secretaries of Agriculture, Energy, Veterans Affairs, Commerce, Education, Labor, EPA, and more. We have a lot of work to do here, but the Senate is going to press forward on these nominations as quickly as possible.

CORONAVIRUS

Madam President, at the same time, the Senate this week will begin the important work of crafting legislation to rescue the American people and the American economy from the continued effects of the COVID–19 pandemic.

We continue to face a crisis unlike any other in our lifetimes. Over the course of a year, more than 26 million Americans contracted the virus and nearly 450,000 have died—more than the number of Americans who died during World War II. Tens of millions of Americans have lost their jobs, thousands of businesses closed their doors for good, and the economy has suffered the worst year of growth, again, since World War II.

Our efforts here in Congress over the past year have saved scores of small